

# Historical Museum Gets Grant for Douglas Exhibit

By Lookout Staff

*August 13* -- A major aerospace company gave \$100,000 to the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum to celebrate the beachside city's deep ties to the history of flight during a ceremony at the Main Public Library Friday.

The grant from the Employee Community Fund of Boeing of California will help fund the hands-on interactive exhibit chronicling the local history of the Douglas Aircraft Company founded in Santa Monica in July 1921.

"We greatly appreciate Boeing's generosity for helping with the museum's capital improvement project," said Louise Gabriel, the museum's president and CEO. "We are confident that this exhibit will attract new potential contributors and raise significant awareness of the new museum."



*Built in 1924, the Douglas World Cruiser was a two-place biplane with a 50-foot wing span, powered by a 420 horsepower Liberty engine. (Photo Courtesy of Boeing)*

The exhibit will feature a portion of a C-47 -- widely considered the most significant transport aircraft ever made -- as it would have been constructed at the Douglas plant in Santa Monica during World War II, museum officials said.

Visitors will be able to walk into the life-size structure that will house the interactive exhibit. -- WWII Douglas Aircraft C-47/Dakota, Donald Douglas and

Douglas Workers -- that will be in the permanent gallery of the new state-of-the-art museum to be built at the new library campus, officials said.

Through a side window, visitors can view a panorama of "Rosie the Riveter" at work on the outside of the plane.

The exhibit will also feature a video chronicling the stories of aviation pioneer, Donald Douglas, his company and the contribution of Douglas workers on the home front during World War II.

"The overall intent of the interactive exhibit is to immerse the visitors in the Douglas history with a visual, tactile and multi-layered experience," museum officials said in a statement.

The company -- whose early claim to fame was the first circumnavigation of the world by air in Douglas planes in 1924 -- was a major employer in Santa Monica, turning out more than 100 aircraft annually.

The company's complex at Clover Field was so vast, mail girls roller-skated through the plant to deliver the intra-company mail. By the end of World War II, Douglas had seven facilities nationwide, including the one in Santa Monica.

After merging with the McDonnell Aircraft Corporation to form McDonnell Douglas in the late 1960s, the company merged with Boeing -- the largest aircraft manufacturer by revenue in the world -- in 1997.

The Douglas exhibit is expected to be a major feature of the new museum, which will provide naming opportunities for major gift donations that will be permanently recognized on the Wall of Legacy and at the sponsoring location.

Benefactors can choose to support interactive exhibits and theme areas in the permanent gallery, the changing exhibit gallery, the research library and the lobby.

For more information about becoming a supporter of the museum, please call (310) 395-2290.